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To whom it may concern.

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**Site:** 129 Staines Road, Twickenham, TW2 5BD

**Application:** Ref: 22/3464/HO – TWO STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS, REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING GARAGE, ALTERATION TO BOUNDARY FENCE AND GATES ALONG STREET AND NEW GATE TO STREET

I write in support of a revised application following the refusal of the above application by a delegated decision on 18/01/2023. The revisions overcome the previous reason for refusal.

The reasons for refusal were as follows:

**I. U0148326 Side Extension**

*The proposed two-storey side and first-floor rear extension, by virtue of its scale, volume and proximity to the street, would create a visually intrusive development with an overbearing impact on Gothic Road to the detriment of the visual amenity of the street and surrounding areas contrary to policy LP1 of the Local Plan and the House Extensions and External Alterations SPD.*

**II. U0148325 Rear Extension**

*The proposed first-floor rear extension, by virtue of its excessive width, would exceed half of the width of the original dwelling and, with the proposed hipped and pitched roof, would form an incongruous form of development contrary to local character to the detriment of the design and appearance of the host building.*

## SITE APPRAISAL

The application site is on a prominent corner plot between Staines and Gothic Road. The two-storey semi-detached late Victorian/early C20<sup>th</sup> building was constructed in red stock brick with slate hipped roof. It is set back from the highway via a modest front garden and driveway. The building has minimal architectural detailing except for a single-storey hipped bay to the front. It typifies much of the architectural style within the vicinity, particularly this terrace of semis and is contrasted with the earlier, much heavier architectural styles of the adjacent terraces and early post-war development opposite.

The side elevation is dominated by a large parapet wall forming the side wall of the single-storey flat-roofed garage (88/2018 and 95/1041/FUL), side boundary fencing, and a single-storey garage building at the rear (94/0141/FUL), adjunct the boundary with No2 Gothic Road. The rear is a classic example of an L-shape outrigger, again constructed in red stock brick with mono pitched roof. There is a corresponding modest rear and front garden, the front being set behind a brick boundary wall.

## EARLIER REFUSAL

As mentioned above, the reasons for refusal are somewhat understandable (Reason 1) and bizarre (Reason 2), particularly referencing that the resulting extension would be more than half the width of the existing house. The application is not to be assessed as though it conformed to the relevant classes in the GPDO and rather on the planning merits of the scheme.

The OR refers to the *House Extensions and External Alterations* SPD (adopted May 2015), the crux of which conforms to the principles of Section 12 of the NPPF to ensure that designs reflect and are sympathetic in scale, mass etc.

The SPD refers to a dedicated section for side and rear extensions (section 5, pg. 6). Within it references similar attributes as mentioned above and that there should be a degree or proportionality in the design choices. It is accepted that the earlier refused scheme did not comply with Figure 7, noting the stepped-in by approx. 1m feature. As much of the existing side extension is relative to Gothic Road and is particularly high due to the boundary parapet wall, this should not have been particularly onerous. However, the first floor should have a degree of visual and design consideration.

The most puzzling aspect of the refusal is the reference to more than half of the width of the dwelling. The application represented a wrap-around feature that retained the adjoining neighbour's offset. This would indeed have resulted in an extension more than half the width of the original, but this is not the relevant test, as it is not an application for permitted development, nor is such a feature prohibited in the SPD. Therefore, it could be, although it is still being determined why this was a reason for refusal, that the relationship with the side extension meant it was perceived as too intrusive. Furthermore, such an extension could be perceived as too bulky, presenting a lot of mass adjacent to the street, which seems to be the rear reason, as identified in the OR.

## **THIS APPLICATION REFUSAL**

Following the refusal, I provided design and planning advice to the applicants. This application is for the same scheme but a slightly different proposal.

Most of the development is to the side and rear, including garage extension and new boundary fencing. It is plain on its merits that both the means of enclosure and garage would be permitted development within the realms of Schedule 1, Part 1, Class A and Part 2, Class A of the GPDO. Both elements were acceptable in the earlier refused design, so they need not be reconsidered. Furthermore, the material palette is identical in this application.

The first-floor side and rear extensions are to be set 1m from the boundary and slightly further back from the front. It retains the flat roof, albeit advised that it might be better to have a pitched roof that provides a degree of visual separation between the first and ground floor elements. It is noted that the LPA considered a pitch to be incongruent. However, I would disagree. The opposite neighbour has a pitched roof, albeit not visually prominent from the street, and most outriggers would also have such a feature, typifying the architectural vernacular.

You will note that the boundary is sloped, tapering toward the rear. Therefore, the gap is greatest toward the front of the property. That said, given the separation, this alternative complies with the guidelines suggested in the SPD. It further reduces the bulk and massing against Gothic Road and would appear similar to the neighbour across the road (No127), which has a similar extension.

The OR mentions the hipped nature of the proposed rear roofing. The LPA considered that this would introduce an incongruent feature in the rear of the property, as it starkly contrasts with the homogeneity of gable ends of the neighbouring properties. Albeit composed mainly of gable ends, there are a small variety of styles within the street scene, and such designs could be more desirable. Given that this is an end-of-street property, there is a degree of flexibility. Indeed, the existing roof form is hipped, and therefore this, to some extent, would be consistent, particularly on the side at Gothic Road. Views toward the other rear elements of neighbouring properties, of which there is a large collection of ugly box dormers, suggest that this hipped roof and extension would hide these incongruent features from the street and thus represent an enhancement. Albeit in contrast to the neighbours and, to an extent, the wider vicinity, the design choice is such that it blends into the existing built fabric of the building. A gable end would be to the detriment of those around it and result in a poor design choice increasing rather than reducing the overall impact of the proposed extension work. A hipped roof, therefore, reduces the bulk, massing and visual impact of the overall proposal to a considerable degree.

As mentioned in the OR, the extension would result in no amenity issues for any neighbour. The same applies to this application.

## **CONCLUSION**

Given the reasons above, the proposal overcomes the earlier reasons for refusal. Although some elements are contrary to established vernaculars, these work to harmonise the roofing's visual, bulk and massing rather than work against those elements that would otherwise be in the form of a gable end.

I trust this is to your satisfaction, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely



**David Lomas**

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Director

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